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The writer of the attached article makes a couple of good points. I thought you might find it interesting.

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## COMMENTARY

The Washington Times

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 1983 / PAGE 3C

## Congressional mauling of CIA vitiates a tool of policy

ALBERT WEEKS

In his thought-provoking book, "Power Through Subversion," historian Laurence W. Beilenson writes that "overthrows by force have been attempted sooner or later almost everywhere on the globe's surface. . . success has been frequent. (It is clear that) government is a sometime thing."

Beilenson is a charter member of a growing, if tiny, league of historians and political scientists who see in subversion — better, counterinsurgency — a weapon with which the West can at once avoid a thermonuclear world war, bloody local wars, and the global spread of totalitarian communism. Helping legitimate pretenders and freedom fighters to govern in countries ruled by tyrants and militarists means, in today's concrete terms, to extend various forms of assistance to anti-Sandinista "rebels" inside and outside Nicaragua or to the anti-communist liberation forces of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola.

Supporters of such activities, which perforce have to be organized with the CIA structure, vehemently insist that their program is largely non-violent (except where totalitarians choose violence). They insist, above all, that subversive measures in the name of democracy for oppressed peoples precludes war by throttling those left-wing militarist elements, whether in or out of power, who would employ guerrilla and "brush-fire" warfare of the most violent type to coerce defenseless "workers and peasants" into the Soviet one-party dictatorial social and political New Order.

Unfortunately, the democratic type of "foreign aid for freedom," as Beilenson neatly terms it, gets a very bad press in much of the Free World. In our own country, Congress succeeds in mauling the CIA to a point where legislative interference into the legitimate executive sphere of secret activities (remember George Washington's Farewell Address?) tends to cripple effective CIA actions that would complicate matters for left-wing terrorism and subversion.

In its war to stop war, the CIA is not only hemmed in by the tightly sealed police states against which it conducts activities but, incredibly, by our own legislators in Washington. The most recent example of such congressional interference in executive-branch covert operations came two weeks ago in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. By a vote of 13 to 2, the committee asserted a congressional "right" to approve specific CIA operations targeted on Central America. Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan, D-N.Y., rejoiced in the fact, he said, that, "We (legislators) want to be part of the process" — i.e., of conducting secret activities abroad.

With all due respect to the defense-minded New York senator, by what possible fiat can Moynihan argue the case for legislative conduct of operations that our constitutional practice clearly assigns the executive branch? The CIA, an agency of that branch, is entrusted with the function of acting as the president's informer and intelligence executor. This is not to say

that various House and Senate committees should not criticize, oversee, advise, or otherwise direct input into the executive branch concerning CIA effectiveness. But the precedent established early this month by which specific covert activities of the CIA are controlled

by the legislative branch; i.e., simply by tax sanction, cutting off funds to CIA when it so wishes — is a step backward in meeting what too many of our solons fail to perceive as the global threat of communism. Most recently, the threat has arisen in our own backyard.



Sen. Barry Goldwater, also a member of the select committee that voted in favor of congressional approval for specified CIA operations, said of the president: "I want him to tell us in plain language just what it is he wants to do relative to Nicaragua and other countries."

Goldwater, always a fervent defender of congressional independence of the executive (even when the incumbent chief executive is of the same party as the senator), appears in this case to have construed legislative separation of powers as legislative power over the executive in an area in which, since time immemorial, the president rightfully reserves to himself prerogatives to conduct what Washington called seditious, secret activities.

It is time that our Republican legislators, let alone the Democrats, who for the most part long since have favored whittling down executive prerogatives in defending the national interest and security, woke up to the needs of the 20th and 21st centuries. Again, Beilenson: "If we had followed a strategy of subversion in North Vietnam, it probably would not have been necessary to have sent a single soldier to South Vietnam. Internal subversion in North Vietnam maintained with the help of money and material would have been strong enough to keep it fully occupied protecting its own government from overthrow by the dissidents among its people. (We) should develop an American Adaptation based on a study of the Lenin Adaptation (of modern sub-

version) and should use it to help dissidents in the communist-governed countries to overthrow their governments."

This is no proposal for "Balloons over the Baltic," the frustrated attempt in the "roll back communism" era of the early 1950s to dis-affect the captive nations, as admirable as that notion was. As explained by Beilenson, Professor Stefan Possory, and others, modern subversion, analogous to the Lenin Adaptation used against us, represents a Western non-military (in the strict sense of international war) program of fighting totalitarian communism on a global scale. This means landing effective foreign aid for freedom in Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, et al., and if possible or feasible, within Cuba, not to mention other member countries of the axis of the "Socialist Commonwealth" itself.

The quickest way to undercut such an effort, of course, is to publicize and expose its inner workings. Thus, it is self-defeating for a senator to trumpet his glee over the fact that the legislative branch will become "part of the process" of waging a struggle that cannot and should not be waged publicly.

Soviet writings on the American system of government long have relished the several diminutions of executive power enacted by Congress during the Vietnam War. That this emasculation of legitimate executive power should continue in a time when executive independence and expedition is at a premium is inexcusable.